

I Live-Yet Not I

I Live, Yet Not I
Romans 5-8
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Introduction

In these four chapters (Romans 5-8) of the Epistle to the Romans, we have the Revelation given of God through the Apostle Paul, on the important subject of Deliverance from Sin.

It is impossible to overestimate its value to the child of God—born of God he longs, above everything else to be free from sinning, and here he has divinely inspired instructions upon the subject.

Let him learn these chapters by heart and cry to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that he may enter into the blessed experience described in them. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and it is to such that He reveals His salvation. Let those who are seeking the blessing of Liberty prayerfully read and ponder these wonderful chapters.

In the expositions in these readings, no attempt at scholarship is made, but a simple unfolding of the contents of the chapters.

When Charles Simeon, who did so great a work at Cambridge, published his sermons (he preached right through the Bible), he wrote in the introduction words to this effect: “You will not find in these expositions anything curious or strange or new, but I shall seek to show you what the Holy Spirit is evidently bringing before us in the passage under consideration.”

This is what I desire to do, and one thing more. Dear John Bunyan was led to Christ under the ministry of Mr. Gifford. “Holy Mr. Gifford,” he always called him, “whose doctrine was much to my establishment.” Mr. Gifford, he tells us, always exhorted them “to take truth on trust from no man, but never reckon they knew any truth until they had it with evidence from Heaven, and God had set them down therein.”

An Open Secret

Yet this Secret of Deliverance is an Open Secret. It is “the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest ... to all nations for the obedience of faith” (Romans 16:25, 26), and these last words discover the secret. Deliverance is entered upon by the obedience of faith. He that abideth in Christ sinneth not, they who walk by the Spirit do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, for where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.

One has expressed it truly as follows: “While we are enjoying the presence of the Lord and rejoicing in Him, we do not want to sin. We must first cease this holy fellowship with Christ before we desire again the evil thing or can bear the thought of grieving the indwelling Holy Spirit.”

These great liberating truths are discussed in the chapters before us. In them is hidden God’s secret, or rather in them is revealed to faith the mystery of the overcoming life.

Let those who are athirst drink freely of this water of life. “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you Free.”

I The “Much More” of Grace, Romans 5

This Epistle of the Romans follows rightly upon the four Gospels, for in them the Gospel is preached to the sinner while in this, the first of the Epistles, the way of God's salvation is explained to the saint. It sets the Gospel out in panoramic order from beginning to end. I have called it elsewhere, "From Guilt, through Grace, to Glory," which may be regarded as a fair summing up of the teaching of the Epistle. In order, then, to understand the chapters we are to consider, it is necessary to glance back at what has gone before. Let us see how the Epistle proceeds. It begins by revealing to us Man's lost and ruined condition by sin. It shows his state (apart from grace) to be absolutely hopeless.

Christianity is the only faith in the world that does this. All other religions, though they freely admit man's sin and guilt, yet give him some hope in himself. Let him pray more, try harder, fast, give, go on pilgrimage, strive, and labor, and then Salvation is within his reach though it may be hard to obtain. Paul's Epistle shuts the door on any such hopes. Man's case is desperate. In this the apostle is following the teaching of our Lord. When the rich young ruler came to Jesus, though He was rich, young, a ruler, moral, religious, and loveable (for Jesus looking on him loved him), he went away unsaved. After he had gone the disciples asked in astonishment: "Who, then, can be saved?" The Lord did not mince matters, but replied: "With man it is IMPOSSIBLE." Impossible! a hard word indeed for the pride of man, and yet true.

Summing up the argument of the first three chapters the apostle concludes: "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19). "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, R.V.). Note the past tense, "have sinned," and the present continuing tense, "fall short." Only grace can meet such a case as this.

Four Nones

Four "NONES" are insisted upon, for "all" are "under sin" (Romans 3:9-12).

1. "There is none RIGHTEOUS. No, not one," that is none is in a right relation to God.
2. "There is none that UNDERSTANDETH." Sin has darkened the mind and blinded the eyes of the heart.
3. "There is none that SEEKETH after God." Sin has turned away the affections—the sinner desires not the knowledge of God.
4. "There is none that DOETH GOOD," for how can anyone in such a state produce good works.

"A corrupt tree," Jesus said, "cannot bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:18). "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4). Such then, is the sad case of fallen man and this without exception (Romans 3:22), without excuse (Romans 1:20-21), and without escape (Romans 2:3).

God having thus concluded all in disobedience, we are told it is that He might have mercy upon all (Romans 11:32 R.V.), and then the method of this mercy is shown.

A Righteousness Revealed

A RIGHTEOUSNESS is revealed—even the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3:21-22). A Gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17) to all who believe. It is proclaimed "unto all," and is "upon all them that believe." It is the Robe of righteousness, spoken of by Isaiah (Isaiah 61:10). It is the Wedding Garment of our Lord's Parable (Matthew 22:11). It is the Best Robe put upon the returning prodigal. It is found alone in Christ who is Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness.

The Sinner Justified

In this righteousness the sinner is Justified, that is, discharged from guilt, acquitted from all charges, relieved of all condemnation (Romans 8:1). Four things are said of this Justification:

1. God justifies the UNGODLY when He believes (Romans 4:5), apart from the law (Romans 4:2) and his own works.
2. He is justified by GRACE (Romans 3:24). It is the sovereign and gratuitous act of God, unmerited and free.
3. He is justified by BLOOD (Romans 5:9), the Lord Jesus having died to this end.
4. He is justified by FAITH (Romans 5:1) when accrediting God's goodness he turns in submission (Romans 10:3) to the Lord Jesus.

I. A Chain of Blessings, Romans 5:1-5

It is at this point in the argument that our study begins, so let us commence by dividing our chapter into sections for the easier grasp of it.

- Romans 5:1-5, we will call a Golden Chain of blessings, following on justification:
- Romans 5:6-11, a Song of Assurance;

- Romans 5:12-19, a Glorious Contrast; and
- Romans 5:20-21, a Grand Consummation.

Romans 5:1-5 God's blessings never come alone. Each gracious gift leads on to another—when we believe and are justified by Grace we come into a fortune. It is for us to count our riches. I have headed this chapter "Much more," an expression that comes five times (Romans 5:9,10, 15, 17, 20). It is the key note of the chapter and reminds us that our justification is the first of a long string of blessings one following on another as we have faith to apprehend and enter into them,

Have you on the Lord believed?

Still there's more to follow.

Our gracious God never exhausts His goodness towards us—we may abound more and more and yet find always more. Look at this string of pearls, the golden chain of unspeakable blessings which we have in Christ.

1. PEACE WITH GOD.

Because we are justified we may be at peace. Our relationship to God resting on the finished work of Christ is unshakeable. As Dr. Bonar says:

I hear the words of Love,
I gaze upon the Blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.

'Tis everlasting peace,
Sure as Jehovah's name;
'Tis stable as His steadfast Throne,
For evermore the same.

This gives "us access by faith into the grace wherein we stand."

2. STANDING IN GRACE. No longer depending upon ourselves, our law-keeping, our good works, we stand where no sin is laid to our charge (Romans 8:33). In chapter 4:6-8 we are told that David describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, and Psalm 32:1-2 is quoted as revealing a fourfold blessedness, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (by atoning blood). "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile." Happy indeed that man who can say, as I heard an old saint of God once say, "And I am that blessed man." To stand where there is no condemnation, accepted in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6) and in Grace that is all-sufficient for our daily need, super-abounding, all-prevailing Grace is an unspeakable blessing.

3. JOY IN HOPE. No longer hopeless, but anticipating glory. Glory is manifested character. Thus the glory of God was seen in Christ, and this is our hope, not only to see Him, to be with Him, but to be like Him. The beauty of the Lord seen upon us—Glory now in godliness of life and Glory then when Jesus comes.

4. CONTENTMENT with our lot, which includes tribulations. We rejoice in them knowing that God will turn them to good account. Troubles exercise us in patience and give us experience of God's love so that we are not ashamed. A young man, who found himself very impatient, once asked ROBERT CHAPMAN to pray for him that he might learn patience. He was rather surprised when Mr. Chapman prayed that the Lord would send him tribulation, and he expostulated. Dear old Mr. Chapman replied, "But it is tribulation that worketh patience."

5. LOVE shed abroad in our hearts. This includes the knowledge and experience of His love to us, and a response of love begotten in our hearts. "We love because He first loved us."

II. A Song of Assurance, Romans 5:6-11

The argument here used by Paul is that used by John in his First Epistle. "Perfect love casteth out all fear." If we contemplate the Love of God in our Gratuitous Justification and the blessings that follow, we are assured that we are safe. How can we perish if those things are so?

Let us look, then, at the Love of God as He commends it to us. The death of Christ was the revelation of God's own Love—God is our Savior, He loved—He gave—He spared not His only Son—He justifies—He is our Savior mediating our Salvation through Christ. How many souls are longing for the Assurance of Salvation? Let them rest it on this—the Great Love that God commends to us in the following particulars. He gives a fourfold description of our fallen estate.

1. We were “without strength” with no power to help or save ourselves.
2. We were ungodly (Romans 5:6) estranged from God and living without Him in the world.
3. We were sinners (Romans 5:8) by birth and practice.
4. We were enemies (Romans 5:10) and yet He loved us.

Men might perhaps die for a good man, but hardly for a righteous one; but He loved us, helpless (without strength), ungodly, sinful enemies, and He met our fourfold need with fourfold Grace.

1. The helpless He died for.
2. The ungodly He justified.
3. The sinner He saved.
4. The enemy He reconciled.

As a child once expressed it: “If He died for us He must want to save us.” This is the great argument for assurance: “If He spared not His own Son ... how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32). How could He love us so and leave us to perish? Surely these things lead us to “Joy in God by whom we have received the Reconciliation.”

III. A Glorious Contrast, Romans 5:12-19

The greater part of this passage is in parenthesis—the brackets begin at Romans 5:13 and end at Romans 5:17. It will help us, therefore, to read the passage first without this clause. It is in effect shortly this: As by one man Sin entered, and death by Sin; and as through one trespass judgment and condemnation came, so by one act of righteousness of the One, the free gift came to all to justification of life. Many were made sinners by one man’s disobedience; many are made righteous by the great act of obedience of the One (Romans 12:18-19). Here, then, we have the First Adam and the Last Adam. The one Sinning all in him (for “in Adam” all die). The other Gracing all in Him (for “in Christ” all live). This introduces a Great Truth, namely, that Faith unites us organically to Christ—We are thereby one with Him by new birth—“In Him” as truly as we were by natural birth “in Adam.” We shall see how blessed the fruit of this union is in the chapters following. By association with Adam we die—by union with Christ we live.

A boy once asked me the question: “Do we sin because we are sinners, or are we sinners because we sin?” I replied: “According to Romans 5 we sin because we are sinners, and unless we find the Savior we shall sin, and sin, and sin, until we pass on to a sinner’s grave and a sinner’s eternity.”

That tree there, is it an apple tree because it bears apples? or does it bear apples because it is an apple tree? Surely it bears apples because it is an apple tree. Indeed if it bore no apples it would still be an apple tree. This is the meaning of verse 14. Those too, were sinners, though they had never sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression. When we examine the passage in brackets (Romans 5:13-17) we find it tells us first that our association with Adam brought sin and death even for those who had not personally sinned, who lived before the era of law. There is no escaping it—we are sinners by birth and die in consequence—we sinned in our Common Ancestor, but being found in Christ, we are graced in Him.

O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight,
And to the rescue came.

Then we have three contrasts drawn in the three verses, Romans 5:15, 16, and 17; which are in parenthesis. The start of verses Romans 5:15 and Romans 5:16 may, and perhaps should be put as questions—Romans 5:15: Shall not the free Gift be as the offence? and Romans 5:16: Shall not the Gift be like the Sin, by one man?

- SIN AND GRACE are contrasted (Romans 5:15). Sin brought death to many, Grace abounds to many—Sin is awful, but Grace super-abounds and is glorious.
- ONE AND MANY (Romans 5:16). One sin meant judgment and condemnation to many. What, then, must be the Abundant Grace that could justify, in spite of many offences, a world of iniquity?
- DEATH AND LIFE (Romans 5:17). What is death to life? Death came by Adam. By Christ those who receive the gift of righteousness reign in life. What a wonderful threefold triumph of Grace!

4. A Grand Consummation, Romans 5:20-21

It is twofold. Though the incoming of the Law caused the offence to abound, nevertheless Grace did much more abound, and in the death of Christ God found a righteous ground upon which Grace could reign. So we have Grace abounding and Grace reigning in righteousness and life. Let us look, then, in closing, at the Five introduced by the words “Much more.” They help us to review the

chapter.

1. If justified, much more SAVED from wrath (Romans 5:9). Here is the ground of assurance. If He has at such cost justified much more we shall be saved. Does a merchantman purchase a goodly pearl at the cost of all he has, to cast it away?

2. If reconciled when enemies by the Death of Christ, much more we shall be SAVED by His life (Romans 5:10). The Savior who died to reconcile, lives to save. It is well to be clear on this—Christ died to reconcile, He lives to save. Salvation is from the Living Risen Lord—our Great High Priest, who, because He hath an unchangeable priesthood and ever lives to make intercession for us, is able to save to the uttermost.

3. If sin produced such dire results, much more will Grace produce ABUNDANT LIFE (Romans 5:15). It was Grace that brought salvation. It is the same Grace that is sufficient for all our need. It establishes the heart. It reigns in life.

4. If death reigneth by sin, much more the justified WILL REIGN IN LIFE by Christ (Romans 5:18). This is the experience of which these chapters testify—REIGNING IN LIFE—through the redeeming all-sufficient risen Lord.

5. So summing up all, we rejoice that where Sin abounded Grace did much more abound (Romans 5:20). Let, then, this be our song of triumph. There is Much More! Much More for us in Christ!

II DID CHRIST DIE AND SHALL SIN LIVE? GOD FORBID! ROMANS 6

We saw from our study of the fifth chapter, two great truths, that we were Justified Gratuitously by the grace of God; and that we are by faith United with Christ our Living Head—that grace was reigning, and that we had our standing in grace where no sin is imputed to us. These two truths lead to a very serious question: Does gratuitous justification mean license to sin? Because God has put me in that wonderful relationship, so that I am standing in grace, does that mean that I need not be particular anymore? May I go on sinning that grace may abound?

The answer is, of course, “God forbid!” (Greek—may it never be) But the fact of such a question being asked reveals the meaning of Justification by Grace. It is apart from law keeping and not of works or merit. It is gratuitous, “without money and without price,” or such a question could never have been raised. Does, then, Grace Abounding and Grace Reigning mean liberty to continue in sin? Certainly not, the very suggestion is shameful, and shows a want of appreciation of the truth. As DR. GRIFFITH THOMAS puts it: “Continuance in sin is impossible to a justified man, because of his union with Christ in death and life.” So the two great truths hang together. Gratuitous Justification, and Union with Christ.

Let me, first of all, read this great chapter to you, indicating the obvious meaning of it, and showing its divisions. In the first verse we have the question: “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” and in the second verse we have the answer: “God forbid!” The Revised Version renders it: “How shall we who died to sin live any longer therein?”

Three Things to Know We then have nine verses divided into three divisions, each beginning with the word “Know.” They are therefore the things that we ought to know, they state three great truths of which we should not be ignorant:

- Romans 6:3. Know ye not—The meaning of your baptism.
- Romans 6:6. Knowing what death with Christ means.
- Romans 6:9. Knowing what risen with Christ means.

Then comes a very earnest appeal and exhortation based upon those three great facts (Romans 6:12-13), not to allow sin to reign, but to yield or present ourselves to God as those alive from the dead. Next comes a glorious promise (Romans 6:14). Sin shall not have dominion over you; and then the question of the first verse is repeated (Romans 6:15). “Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace?” And again the emphatic answer, “God forbid!”

A Fourth Thing to Know

This is followed by a fourth paragraph beginning “Know ye not?” that to sin again is again to become its slave, a solemn warning of the result of allowing sin to continue (Romans 6:16), while holiness and fruitfulness are the result of walking in the obedience of faith (Romans 6:17-23). So then we discuss the question whether gratuitous justification is liable to lead men to license, and to treat sin lightly, and we have the answer—No, that can never be, because we saw in the 5th chapter that whereas we were in Adam by our first birth, we have now come into Christ and we are found in Christ and being in Christ we cannot continue in sin, for we are told perfectly plainly that the man who continues in the practice of sin is of the devil, and not of God.

Such being in brief the outline of this chapter we will consider it under seven heads.

1. Our Position by Grace, Romans 6:1-2 "We died to sin" (Romans 6:2).

Our Union with Christ involves this. Let us see how the apostle explains this. He does so as we saw by asking three questions. "Know ye not?" We are first of all reminded that we should know what is the meaning of our baptism? There are two matters in baptism: first the fact, the real thing, and then the figure or the symbol. The real baptism is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, whereby every believer has been baptized into Christ. Water baptism is, of course, the figure of that, and though water baptism is of no value in itself, it has immense value as setting forth in figure the meaning of our true baptism, our union with Christ. We are told that at our baptism we were baptized into Christ. We entered into such association with Him, that our baptism means that we died with Him, we became associated with Him in His death, and we are associated with Him in His resurrection. So that when a man is baptized he stands forward and confesses himself dead, he desires to be buried. He says, in effect, "I have died, bury me." He is then buried in the watery grave. Following this there is the resurrection, and he comes out to walk in newness of life. So, says the apostle, did you not know that such was the meaning of your "baptism into Christ?" That you died with Him, and having been baptized into His death, so you are also in the likeness or figure of His resurrection.

2. Our Death with Christ, Romans 6:3-8

The second thing we ought to know is: What is the meaning of our having died with Christ? We are told that our old man was crucified with Christ. All that I am by nature, found guilty, condemned, and executed. His death being reckoned my death. When I look at the Cross of Christ, I see not only my blessed Lord hanging there in order that He might put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and clear away the obstacle which keeps the sinner eternally from God, so that God enthroned in grace may stretch out hands of welcome to the sinner and receive him righteously on the ground of that shed blood for Christ's sake—not only do I see Christ dying there for my sins, but I see myself there, my old man, all that I got from Adam the first; I see myself brought there, a guilty, rebel sinner by birth, a worse sinner by practice, without excuse, righteously condemned by a holy God; I see myself brought to judgment. I see myself dying under judgment for sin in the Person of my beloved Substitute. Many hymn writers have dwelt upon this wonderful truth, but I doubt if any have done so with such simplicity and beauty as ANN GILBERT in her hymn for the children.

He knew how wicked man had been,
And knew that God must punish sin;
So out of pity Jesus said.
'I'll bear the punishment instead.'

So our old man has been brought of God into judgment, and has been condemned and put to death in the purposes of God in the Substitute. The reason He tells us is that "the body of sin" might be destroyed (not annihilated) but rendered helpless, may cease to function (the word is *katargethe*)—translated elsewhere "made of none effect" (Romans 4:14), bring to nought (I Corinthians 1:28), put down (I Corinthians 15:24). The same word is used of the Devil in Hebrews 2:14. The Lord at the Cross "destroyed" him. He did not annihilate him, for he still goes about his deadly business, but the Lord broke his power, so that he cannot function in the case of the believer. "The wicked one toucheth him not" (I John 5:18). The same is true of the flesh, the old man has been judged and crucified, so that the body of sin may no longer function; that evil power within us may no longer reign, because the old man has been crucified, that henceforth we should not serve sin. That "old man," that old villain, had in him a principle of sin. We see it in the next chapter, "the law of sin which is in my members." In order that that law in my members, that "body of sin," might not function, my old man has been crucified. He that Died Is Justified Then we are told that he that died is justified from sin. The word "Freed" in Romans 6:7 being as in the R.V. "justified." One who has died under the judgment of God is thereby justified.

It is an interesting fact that under the Scottish Law, when a man was put to death, he was spoken of as being "justified." When they executed a man in Edinburgh, they put up the notice, "So and So was justified at the Market Cross this morning at 8 o'clock"—"justified"? yes, paid the penalty, executed, slain for his sin. In the Oxford Dictionary, we read this: "In Scotland, in the Middle Ages, the murderer taken red-handed ... was justified without any unnecessary or inconvenient delays of process." And LORD BYRON, in one of his poems, has the words: "Let them be justified, and leave exposed their wavering relics in the place of judgment." So the sinner who has died is regarded as having been justified. The account is settled, there is no charge against him, it has been paid and discharged; so when I see Christ dying for me, and know that my old man has been crucified with Him, I know that my claim is settled, that I have died, and that God justifies me gratuitously in the riches of His grace.

Some years ago I was preaching in the open air, and a young fellow came up to me afterwards and took exception to what I had been saying. So I said to him, "But you are a sinner, are you not?" "Oh, yes," he said, "we are all sinners." "Then," I said, "as a sinner you are condemned, are you not?" He said, "I do not see that." "What!" I said, "do you not see that the just Judge of all the earth must condemn a sinner? What sort of God do you believe in, an unjust God?" "Well," he said, "If it comes to that, you are condemned too!" I said, "Of course I am, but it may surprise you to hear that I have been executed!" The young fellow looked at me in perfect amazement, and said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I mean what I say, I was executed in a most horrible manner. I was crucified."

But, thank God, I have had a resurrection, and that is why I am alive now.” That is the truth. In Christ I have been executed. I have been brought to judgment. I deserved it, and the just and holy God was right in condemning me, but, thank God, in the holy Substitute I died, and therefore, having died, I am justified from sin.

3. Risen with Christ, Romans 6:9-13

Now we come to the third thing we ought to know, and that is WHAT OUR ASSOCIATION WITH CHRIST IN RESURRECTION MEANS (Romans 6:9-10). I am going to ask you to follow me closely here, because I have never heard this instruction brought out before as it should be. Notice this ninth verse. In the verses before, Christ died for sin. In this verse He is said to have died to sin.

Observe the difference between “for sin” and “to sin.” Christ not only died for sin as our Substitute but He has died once for all to sin. In other words, He is done with the wretched sin question forever. He died once for all, He will never have to do it again; “death has no more dominion over Him”; He lives to God. He has done with the cursed thing called sin forever. This leads us to—

The True Reckoning of Faith --Not reckoning that I have got to die. I have died. I have been executed. This is a fact, once and forever established, but the reckoning is this, that as Christ had done with sin, so I have done with sin. Sin! what have I any more to do with sin? “Did Christ die?” said one old Puritan, “and shall sin live? God forbid!” Since I know that Christ died to sin, to the abominable, hateful thing; died to it once for all, then I am done with it too. I will reckon I have died to it. And in that He lives unto God, I will reckon that I live unto God too.

That is the reckoning of faith; it is quite simple, there is nothing mysterious about it. Christ died for sin, and I in Him died for sin, I am justified from sin. Christ also died to sin, then by the grace of God I have done with sin too. I now reckon myself to have died to sin, to be so associated with my Lord that, henceforth there will be no sin for me. But not only do I reckon that I too have died unto sin, but thank God, I reckon I am alive unto God. Christ is alive to God carrying on His blessed ministry there at the right hand of God. Then I will live unto God too. It is a great thing to learn in practice this holy reckoning—Sin! What have I to do with sin? Sin! What has sin any more to do with me? We have parted forever. Reckon, then, yourself to have died forever with your Lord, both to the pleasing temptations and flattering invitations of sin.

The Yielding of Self

THE EXHORTATION now follows, not to let sin reign, but to present ourselves to God. Here Paul says: Do not let sin reign in your mortal body; do not obey it in the lusts thereof. Then in Romans 6:13: “Do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin”—the present tense here—Do not be yielding, do not keep on yielding yourselves to sin; but yield—the aorist imperative, the completed historic past—Let it be once for all settled; done, a finished transaction; once for all yielded unto God, “as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

That word “yield” is the same word as in Romans 12:1, is translated “present.” I like “present” better. The thought is this: You have been quickened from the dead, and thus you yield to God, “Lord, I am alive from the dead. Here I am; take every bit of me. I have done with sin, as my Lord has; I want to live unto Thee, as my Lord is living unto Thee, so I present myself to Thee as one alive from the dead.” It is not submission as to an enemy, but the presentation of oneself as a bride to the bridegroom who has wooed and won her in love.

Sometimes I have the privilege of marrying a couple. As they stand before me I say to the bride: “Wilt thou have this man to be thy husband?” She says only two words, “I will!” and they are joined for life. That is the kind of presentation “Lord, that I may be married to Thee, being alive from the dead, to bring forth fruit unto God.” Lord, “I will!” Oh, the joy! Every day, repeat that once for all transaction, “I am Thine, here I am, Lord, use me.” So we present ourselves.

4. The Glorious Promise, Romans 6:14-16

The glorious promise is now given to us: “Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace.” But we will not make that an excuse for sinning. God forbid! We are under grace and therefore sin shall not have dominion over us. How we love Mr. HUDSON POPE’S fine chorus:

Sin shall not have dominion over you,
O what a glorious promise, and it’s true!
God has said it. It must stand.
Pass it on, ’tis simply grand!

Sin shall not have dominion over you.

In the first verses we saw our freedom from condemnation. Now the apostle is carrying us on to freedom from the reign or dominion of sin in our lives. How is that to be put into practice? I ask your attention very solemnly to the next verse (Ro 6:16).

The Servants of Sin

In this verse is given the fourth thing you ought to know. If we sin we shall become Servants of Sin again. As the Lord Jesus said, "He that committeth sin is the servant of sin." so the apostle says here. Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to sin, you will become slaves to sin. You are a slave to that which you obey, "whether of sin unto death or obedience unto righteousness." You say, "I am a Christian." Yes, but you may be a slave all the same. If you think that a Christian is exempt from the common law that a man is a servant of that which he obeys, you have made a great mistake. You would not be so foolish as to say, "The fire will not burn me, for I am a Christian." Put your hand into the fire and see if it will not burn you. I promise you it will, and "iniquity burneth like a fire," if you put your hand into that fire it will burn you. Be under no misapprehension, you will become the servant of sin if you obey it. So do not obey it. We should not sin because we are under grace. We need not sin because we are under grace. Let us then say: We will not sin because we are under all sufficient grace.

5. The Principle of Liberty, Romans 6:17-18

Let us now consider Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you being then made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness." I want to tell you earnestly that herein lies the secret of not being a servant of sin. It is in heart-obedience. If you will obey your Lord from your heart, out of true love to Him—and Jesus said, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments"—if you will obey from the heart, you will be His free man, and sin shall not have dominion over you. I know of no other way of deliverance except by this heart-obedience, the response to God of an obedient heart and submissive will; if you walk thus in obedience you are free. Faith triumphs in obedience. Jericho was a glorious triumph in the obedience of faith, but Ai was a great failure because of disobedience; no general can lead lawless troops to victory. God has taught us a great principle in that history.

Free from Sin's Dominion

But the apostle thanks God that our case is different. We are FREE FROM SIN, that is, its dominion, because—note well the condition—we have obeyed from the heart. We have discovered the secret of liberty from the reign of sin, Heart Obedience to the Lord, the true response of faith to Him in the secret recesses of the inner life. I remember how the Lord revealed this truth to me in power. Many years ago, when I was as it were, down in Romans 7, I prayed thus, asking God a question—(I do not know whether you ask God questions in prayer; it is a very good way, for we always receive an answer)—"Lord," I said, "Why dost Thou not deliver me?" And the answer came quick as lightning in my conscience: "How can I deliver you if you do not do what I tell you?" That day I learned a truth that was burnt forever into my heart, one which has served me the rest of my life. If you will obey from the heart you will then be made free from the dominion of sin.

A Mighty Deliverance

Years ago a lady came into my office dressed in Salvation Army costume. Whether she is living now or not I do not know. She had one of those faces that are lit up with glory from the inside; her face shone with the inner peace and joy of God. After we had finished our legal business, I said to her: "Tell me, please, how were you saved?" She said: "It's a sad story. I was brought up by a father who was given to drinking. I used to sit by his side while he drank his spirits, and he would open my little mouth, and taking the half-melted piece of sugar from the spirits, would put it in my mouth. I loved it so that sometimes I would touch his arm and he would give me just a little spoonful of the cursed liquor."

"Before I was of age I was a hopeless drunkard; I lived upon the streets in shame, and I do not suppose there could have been a more wretched creature on God's earth. I had delirium tremens, but my life was spared, and I continued in abject misery until some dear sister in Christ pointed me to the Savior. I came to Him and He delivered me. Hallelujah, what a Savior!"

Prompt Obedience

Then she added: "It is like a horrible nightmare from which I have awakened. I can hardly believe that I am the same person." So I said to her: "I am often speaking to young people, and many of them want to know the way of deliverance. You must have had many evil habits and very strong passions; you must have had a terribly corrupt mind after that life of shame. Tell me, will you, how you were delivered from it all after you were reconciled to God? Tell me your secret. How do you continue thus in happy liberty and joy." Her reply was: "I can tell you in a word—prompt obedience!" I shall never forget how she said the words, "prompt obedience!" She added, "God gave me light, and I walked in it and I was free." Beloved, do you want to be free from sin? Then obey from the heart, and as you walk in the obedience of faith, you will be free, a happy man, God's freed man, made free from sin! What glorious liberty!

6. The Habitual Presentation of the Members to God, Romans 6:19-20

Here we come to the sixth point. We have seen the "Once for all" presentation; we see now the habitual yielding. The apostle goes on to say, that, having made the presentation we should habitually yield ourselves fully and wholly to our Lord. "I speak after the

manner of men," he says, "that as ye have yielded your members' servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

Servants to Righteousness

There is no longer any secret about these things. "He that abideth in Him sinneth not ..." (1 John 3:6). If we will walk in the obedience of faith, we shall abide in Christ and He in us, and in exact measure as we abide in Christ, so we shall cease to sin. We used to yield our members instruments for the devil to use; now let us yield them to God, and He will make them instruments of righteousness unto holiness. When we were servants to sin we were free from righteousness; we did not trouble about righteousness. What fruit had we then in those things of which we are now ashamed! Bitter fruit indeed! Then let us not touch them again. Yield yourself wholly to God, and you will have your fruit unto holiness, "and the end everlasting life."

EVAN HOPKINS used to express the truth thus: "It is a crisis leading to a process." There must be adjustment before there can be holy living. An arm out of joint must be put back before it can be used. So the initial presentation, the happy adjustment, the new attitude of the heart to God, must precede the life of service. The first presentation, the full submission to the obedience of faith, is the beginning, and the rest is of the same nature, the daily, hourly, momentary presentation of all the powers of heart and mind and will in the loving response of faith's obedience—that He who redeemed may use the purchased possession.

7. Fruit unto Holiness, Romans 6:21-23

Such a crisis followed by a process will bear fruit. Holiness is likeness to Christ. It is the formation of Christ in us. It is to have the mind of Christ within, and to walk as He walked outwardly. We are thus a sweet savor of Christ to God in every place. This is the fruit unto Holiness in those who are "free from sin."

A Threefold Deliverance

May I close our review of this chapter by calling your attention to the three times that the expression occurs, "free from sin." It will help us to grasp the whole, since it fitly summarizes the chapter.

1. Romans 6:7. Having died with Christ we are justified—free from the CONDEMNATION OF SIN. Verse 7 says: "he that is dead is free from sin." As I have already pointed out, that means that the one who has died with Christ is thereby justified from sin. This first freedom from sin is freedom from the condemnation of sin.
2. Romans 6:17-18. Obeying from the heart we are free from THE REIGN OF SIN. Ye have obeyed from the heart. "Being then made free from sin." This is freedom from the dominion of sin.
3. Romans 6:21. Habitually yielding ourselves to God, we are free from THE FRUIT OF SIN. "Being now made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." If I am no longer under the dominion of sin, there can be no fruit of sin; for where sin is mortified, it cannot bear fruit. So we are free from the bitter fruit of sin. Thank God for this threefold deliverance from sin!

III THE STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW, ROMANS 7

In our study of Romans 6, we noticed the promise, "Sin shall not have dominion, for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14, R.V.). What does it mean, "Ye are not under law," and why not? The answer is, because "the strength of sin is the law." The law can show us what we ought to be and what we are not; can show us what we are, and can curse us, but cannot save us. Unless, therefore, we are delivered from it we shall never know true liberty or freedom from sin. It is this question of Deliverance from Law that we have brought before us in this Romans 7 chapter.

The chapter is easily divided. It begins with an illustration from the legal relationship of husband and wife of what it means to be delivered from the law—or "discharged" (R.V.) from law (Romans 7:1-3). The explanation follows the illustration in Romans 7:4-6.

The rest of the chapter is divided by three questions:

1. Firstly, in Romans 7:7, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin?" Then the answer: "God forbid!" explained in the following Romans 7:7-11, and concluding with the statement: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12).
2. Secondly: "Was then that which is good made death unto me?" (Romans 7:13). And the answer, "God forbid!" This is explained in the following verses Romans 7:13-23.
3. Thirdly: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24). And the answer is: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:25).

Before considering how it is set forth, let us first state some General Principles as to the Law and the believer's relation to it.

1. Because the believer is "not under the law," it does not mean he is lawless. He is enslaved(or enlawed) to Christ, "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ" (I Corinthians 9:21). Liberty is not license. It is freedom from all that would hinder us being wholly Christ's. We are not under Law because under the gracious rule of Christ. It is a change of government, a change of masters, or as we shall see later, of husbands. We look no longer to the tables of stone, but to a living Person.

2. Because he is not under the law, he does not despise the law. He recognizes it as holy, just and good—he can say, "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psalm 119:97). It is a very foolish person who despises the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are the most magnificent thing this world has ever seen. We ought to thank God for them, what a happy place Britain would be if they were kept. All would worship God; they would never take His Name in vain; all would keep the one day in seven; children would obey their parents, and nobody would covet or want to steal; we should not need any police force, or such like. Thank God He has given the Ten Commandments to hold wicked men somewhat in awe of His authority. Therefore nobody who has any sense would despise the law; it is a reflection of the moral character of God. No Christian wants to break any Commandment; although he is not under the law, he does not despise the law.

3. He is not under law as looking to be justified by law-keeping, "for by the works of the law, no flesh shall be justified in God's sight."

4. Moreover THE LAW CAN NEVER BE A SAVIOR. All man's efforts to keep the holy commandments will never give him deliverance from the sin that dwells in him, and overcomes him. An old writer, testifying to the fact that the law so far from being a Savior, served only to provoke and inflame sin, said somewhat quaintly: "That before he was saved, he preached morality till there was scarce a moral person left in the parish."

5. Again the law as a basis of covenant relationship with God, is hopeless—MAN CANNOT LIVE UNDER A COVENANT OF WORKS (see Hebrews 8:13). That old covenant—not the law, but the covenant based on it—has passed away. It was never intended to be a permanent basis of relationship. Being unable to effect the purpose of God of bringing men to righteousness, the covenant of works waxed old and vanished away (Hebrews 8:13).

6. SANCTIFICATION OR HOLINESS IS NOT BY LAW—a legal spirit is never a Holy Spirit. Holiness is not by trying to keep the Commandments, but by walking with and abiding in Christ.

7. Therefore the believer, that is the sinner justified by Grace, is not under law— a. As to his Standing—having died to it by the body of Christ (Romans 7:4). b. As to his practice—as he walks by the Spirit. We read in Galatians 5:18: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

The True Life of Faith, Romans 7:1-6

I have thought it well to state to you these general principles. Let us now turn to the text and see how they are brought before us. The first paragraph, Romans 7:1-6, illustrates our deliverance from the law. Husband and wife are bound to one another by the law until death dissolve the union, but if either of them die the bond is broken, there is then no law to prevent either being married again. The law binds the parties only so long as they live (Romans 7:2). Now when we were under law, the law being here regarded as our husband, we could not be married to another until death dissolved the union, only then were we discharged from the law. But we died in the death of Christ "by the body of Christ" (Romans 7:4), and the legal obligation being ended, we became free to marry again.

The law, our first husband, stirred up our sinful passions (Romans 7:5, R.V.), and brought forth fruit unto death, but now being discharged from the law, we are married to Another, to Christ, the One who was raised from the dead, and by Him we bring forth fruit unto God. Here is the great secret of the true life of Faith—we are joined to the Lord in an abiding and eternal union. He is our Husband, all our newness of life, and fruitfulness in service, are the fruit of that union. No legal spirit could effect what this holy and blessed union with our Risen Lord produces. We are married to another, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. It is quite in order that a slave should be under rules and commandments, but what bridegroom would think of putting his bride under law? Our Heavenly Bridegroom does not put His Bride under commandments. Did you put your bride under commandments when you were married? I hope you did not. You did not give her a list of rules as to how she should behave. No, you said: "Let us go along happily together in a blessed mutuality in our new life." So our dear Lord loves us, and our union with Him is a bondage of love; we are enlawed to Him because we love Him from the bottom of our hearts.

Suffer another homely illustration. Some children live in the nursery under a strict governess. She has drawn up a code of rules for

conduct at meals. They must not put their elbows on the table; must not speak while eating; and so on. One day they are invited on mother's birthday to dine with her. One little innocent asks mother, shall we bring the "rules" downstairs with us? We can guess mother's reply. "No, dear, we shall not need the rules today while you are with me." So those who abide in Christ and walk by faith in Him need no other law than the law of love, the perfect law of liberty.

This paragraph, Rom.7:7-13, describes the nature and work of the law. Let us look carefully at it, and allow me to explain it by some simple "illustrations."

The Law No Savior

We saw that the law could never be a Savior. This I have illustrated elsewhere, as follows: Suppose a boy fallen into a well-- he is crying out for help, and I come to the top of the well, and inquire how he fell in. He tells me he was not looking where he ran, and so he fell-- he is up to his armpits in cold water, will I help him out? Suppose I tell him I will write him out ten excellent rules for not falling into wells, and drop them down to him, saying, "If you will keep them you will never fall into a well again." How would he answer my folly? "Ah" he would say, "Rules cannot save me, I need a Savior, or I shall perish." I recall a letter I received from a child. It read somewhat as follows: I have been a very naughty girl lately, but I am going to be good. I have made a list of rules, and have pinned them up in my bedroom." I wrote to her that her rules could not change her heart, she must turn to the sinner's Savior. After the illustration and explanation in 7:1-6, the apostle, in the rest of this chapter, asks three questions, and answers them at length. Let us look at these in turn.

Is the Law Sin?

Is the law sin because it brought forth fruit unto death in me? God forbid! (Rom 7:7). The law is not sin but:

1. BY THE LAW IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN (Rom 3:20).

The law shows up sin—discovers it. Let us suppose your face is dirty, and I bring you ten looking glasses, each glass will tell you your face is dirty, but none of them will wash it. So the law shows me my sinful heart, but cannot change it. Or suppose the wall of a building were crooked, and I brought ten plumb-lines—each of them would show the wall to be crooked, but none of them would straighten it. So sin was "dead," that is unknown and comparatively inactive, until the law came and exposed it.

2. THE LAW NOT ONLY EXPOSED BUT PROVOKED SIN.

For prohibition provokes. Forbid a boy a thing, and it will be the one thing he most wants to do. Sin, under provocation, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence (Rom 7:8), that is evil desire, unsatisfied passion. Just as a poisonous serpent curled up in the hole of a rock, when attacked raises its head in defiance—so does the evil heart reveal its rebellion and the exceeding sinfulness of sin under the provocation of the law. Put those ten holy commands to your sinful heart and there will be an explosion. The holy law of God will discover to you what your heart is like. The apostle did it, and—

3. SIN BY THE LAW SLEW HIM (Rom 7:11).

"I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Rom 7:9). In other words, the law by exposing our sinful state renders our case hopeless. I was staying at a house with two Jewesses, pleasant girls, and willing to talk about spiritual things, and we had some happy talks. One day I said to them: "You Jews make a great mistake. You think that God gave you the commandment that you might live by it. It is a mistake. He gave it to kill you." I then walked away, for I felt that was enough for one day. What happened? As I expected they sought me out afterwards, and said: "Kindly explain yourself." I said: "You try to keep God's commandments, and the more you try, the more you will see how wicked your hearts are." To this one of them replied thoughtfully: "That is true anyhow." Then I concluded by quoting the words of the apostle: "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Another letter from a child said: "I seem to be worse instead of better, since I've been trying to be good." The law seemed to promise me hope, but sin provoked by the law beguiled me, and slew me (Rom 7:11).

Was the Law Made Death to Me?

The second question is in Romans 7:13: Was that which is good (the law) made death to me? Again, God forbid! It was not the law, but sin provoked by the law that killed. Let us suppose a glass of water to contain a deadly, but invisible poison. Taking a bottle, I pour from it a perfectly harmless fluid which causes the poison in the glass to turn to crimson, and thus to reveal itself. So the law, holy, just, and good in itself, caused sin to blush to crimson and scarlet, and thus to reveal itself in its true nature—"that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Thank God, grace meets that case. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be

as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isaiah 1:18). Such is the work of the law. Can we base any hope of life on it? Nay, we must be free from the law, or we shall never be free from sin and sinning, for “the strength of sin is the law.”

The Nature of Indwelling Sin, Rom 7:14-25

The last paragraph, Rom 7:14-25, shows us the nature of the indwelling sin that the law discovered. The apostle states it simply thus: “I find then a law”—that is an indwelling principle in himself—actually in his members (Rom 7:23) a law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). In other words, the law of God discovered and revealed in him a law of sin. Law has two meanings, it means either an inherent principle within, as the law of fire to burn and the law of water to quench, or it means a commandment imposed from without. It was an inherent principle of sin within that the law discovered. This law which he found in himself is called by various names. “Sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom 7:17), “the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom 7:23), “the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2), “sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:3), or for short, “the flesh.” Then he describes the working of it.

1. The man being carnal is SOLD UNDER IT (Rom 7:14). This language is borrowed from the Old Testament. “Thou hast sold thyself for nought” (Isaiah 50:1; 52:3). Sin has a legal right to reign since we sold ourselves to it; as the people of Israel were warned in Deuteronomy 28:68; “Ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen.”

2. Sin causes him to do, not what he would but THAT WHICH HE HATES(Rom 7:15 and 19). “The good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” In other words, sin is master. So much so, that he distinguishes between himself and the sin in him— twice—“It is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom 7:17 and 20), not to excuse it, but to acknowledge it as a bitter hard fact. He has become by sinning the servant of sin.

3. Evil is present in him—warring against him and making him a slave(Rom 7:21 and 23). “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” This causes him to cry out, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this dead body?” (Rom 7:24).

BUNYAN graphically illustrates all this in the Pilgrim’s Progress. Faithful is recounting his experiences to Christian, and tells how Adam the First who dwelt in the town of Deceit, met him and promised him many delights, and that he should be his heir at last, if he would go with him. He had, he said, three daughters, the Lust of the flesh, the Lust of the eyes, and the Pride of life, and Faithful should marry them all if he would. But Faithful saw written on his forehead, “Put off the Old Man, with his deeds,” and it came burning hot into his mind, that this Old Man would make him his slave, so he turned away from him; but as he went, he felt him take hold of his flesh, and give him such a deadly twitch back, that he thought he would pull part of himself after him. This made him cry out, “O wretched man!”

And Bunyan goes on further to tell how directly afterwards one came, and “was but a word, and a blow, for down he knocked me, and laid me for dead; but when I asked him, wherefore he served me so? he said, Because of my secret inclining to Adam the First, and with that struck me another deadly blow. When I cried him mercy, he said, I know not how to show mercy—he had doubtless made an end of me, but that One came by and bid him forbear. I did not know who bid him forbear, but I perceived the holes in His hands, and in His side; then I concluded that He was our Lord.” To which Christian answered: “That man that overtook you was Moses; he spareth none, neither knoweth he how to show mercy, to those that transgress his law.”

To sum up, we have learned from this chapter three great truths:

1. That the believer is delivered by death with Christ from the law. It was necessary, for
2. The law discovered, inflamed, and provoked sin, and took away all hope. It revealed
3. The law of sin in the members which held us in bondage, and from which the law could never deliver us.

Our chapter ends with an anticipation of what is coming in the next. The third question: “WHO SHALL DELIVER ME FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH?” is answered: “I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord” (Rom 7:25). We shall see how in chapter 8. We shall learn of another Law, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus that effects what the law could never do. It delivers from the law of Sin and death in us.

We are concerned, then, with Three Laws

1. THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH in our members. The Flesh.
2. THE LAW OF GOD that condemned Sin in the Flesh but could not deliver from it, and

3. THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT of Life in Christ that does deliver. The apostle is said here to refer to an awful form of death, where a living man was bound face to face to a dead body and allowed thus to perish.

So the apostle cries out for deliverance from the body of this death and finds neither in himself or in the law any escape from it. In this chapter he cries, I cannot by the law; the next will lead us to the song of Triumph, I can by the Spirit. John Newton, the writer of the beautiful hymn, "How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear," puts it thus:

various maxims, forms, and rules,
That pass for wisdom in the schools,
I sought my passions to restrain;
But all my efforts proved in vain.

But since my Savior I have known
My rules are all reduced to One,
To keep my Lord by faith in view,
This strength supplies and motive too.

IV THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE, ROMANS 8:1-14

In chapter 7 we saw that the law could not deliver us from the law of sin which it discovered in our members. We saw also that all we could expect from the law was condemnation, judgment, and death. But the chapter ended on a note of triumph, when the writer cried out, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" and answered his own question with that beautiful word, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" So now we are to learn of the Deliverance that is to be found in Him. Let us, then, look at the passage.

No Adverse Judgment,

In Rom 8:1 we read: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." We saw how we had been born into Adam, and how also we had come into Christ, being associated with Him in His death and burial and resurrection. The apostle reminds us again that our old man having been crucified; that we having been brought into judgment and executed in God's sight; "there is therefore now no condemnation" no adverse judgment, no charge against His elect, for they are found in Christ Jesus. "He that ... believeth on Him ... shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). How happy to know that we can look up into the Father's face and know that "there is therefore now no condemnation."

Then the next verse tells us that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." We saw that the law discovered in us an evil principle; you remember how it was defined; the law of sin and death. Now we are introduced to a third law, the law of the Spirit of Life, and we are told that that law has delivered us from the law of sin and death. Now we have in these two verses

Calvary and Pentecost

We look at Calvary, and we say, "There is therefore now no condemnation." We look at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost was poured out from Heaven, and we know that when we believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, not only did we see the curse removed because of Calvary, but we received the Holy Spirit because of Pentecost. For the promise at Pentecost was this: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." So that every believer, looking to Calvary, says, There I died; and looking to Pentecost, says: There I was baptized by the Holy Ghost.

So he rejoices in the double blessing of Calvary and Pentecost. He is freed from condemnation because of the bloodshed, and he is set free from the law of sin and death by the indwelling Spirit that he received when he came to Christ. Note the past tense. "The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I am God's free man. It is not only that there is no condemnation, but there is liberty; I have been brought into both in Christ Jesus.

How shall we understand the past tense here.

Perhaps a simple illustration will help you to do so. A father and his little son were walking in the garden in the springtime when the display of early beauty was at its best. "What is gravitation, father?" asked the boy, "Gravitation, my son, is a law or principle of nature by which everything is attracted or drawn down to the earth. Thus, if you drop a stone or an apple, the earth draws it down, and so it falls as we say, to the earth." "Oh, but father," objects the child, "look at those beautiful tulips. They all go upwards. They are not drawn down." "True, my boy; but that is because in them there is another law at work. The law of life, which is stronger than the law of gravitation has made them free from it as long as they live. See, if I destroy the life by cutting one off, it falls at once to the ground." So the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has set me free. Let me walk in it; let me enjoy it, and I am free. I am not

struggling to get free; I have been set free in the Spirit, and I am bidden to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made me free. I am not struggling for victory; I am standing in victory. I have not to struggle to get out of the horrible pit. He lifted me out; set my feet on the Rock and established my goings; and He bids me, "Stand fast in that victory that I have gained for you." Rejoice in it, and you will know what it is to be free.

The Law Weak through the Flesh Romans 8:3-5

The reason that the law could not do this was because it was weak through the flesh. But what the law could not do the blessed Son of God did—God sending His Son, born of a Virgin, in the likeness of sinful flesh (not sinful flesh, for that holy Thing, that Body prepared for Him by God, was without sin) that One, though made in the likeness of sinful flesh, offered Himself as a sin-offering. And what the law could not do, He did; condemning that cursed thing, sin in the flesh, that we might be freed thus from the burden and the power of sin, and might have His righteousness fulfilled in us. The result of the believer having received the Holy Spirit is that he does not want to break the law. He does not want to steal, to bear false witness. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us because we have been brought into liberty by the indwelling Spirit.

This liberty of the Spirit is ours in experience as we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And as we do so the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. Not that we are justified thereby, we have been already justified by grace—not in the sense of sinless perfection, but as Dr. HANDLEY MOULE puts it: "In a true living and working consent to its principles—the consent of full conviction and of a heart whose affections are won to God."

The Believer's Position Romans 8:10

The believer's position, then, is defined in Romans 8:10: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The body has still got in it the principle of sin and of death (Romans 5:10). You know that, for unless the Lord comes you will certainly die. One day we shall receive "the Adoption," the redemption of the body; but until that day we groan in this body (Romans 8:23), for we are living in a body that has still got the sin principle in it. But our spirit has been quickened to newness of life because God has justified us. So the present position of the true believer is this, if Christ is really in him as Lord and Savior, he has got a quickened Spirit in a dead body. He has a body in which there is the law of sin and death; but his spirit has been regenerated and quickened into new life.

Flesh Walkers and Spirit Walkers, Romans 8:6-9

But it is possible for the justified man to walk after the flesh and thus to fail in experience of the blessedness of deliverance. Thank God it is also possible for him to walk after the Spirit. So now the apostle treats of two kinds of walkers. Flesh walkers and Spirit walkers. Those who walk after the flesh and those who walk by the Spirit—and contrasts them. He insists upon this great truth, that it is those who walk after the Spirit who enjoy life and peace (Romans 8:6). Let us consider what he says of those who walk after the flesh. The flesh shows many different manifestations. There is the moral flesh for example, that delights in self-righteousness and self-esteem and pride. Many walk in that proud, self-righteousness before God, which is abominable in His sight. There is the religious flesh that delights in superstition and will-worship—often playing with ecclesiastical toys instead of worshipping by the Spirit, and there is the carnal flesh that indulges its own desires, in those things of which it ought to be ashamed. Upon the flesh God has pronounced the sentence of death. Do you want to know the secret of deliverance? It is to walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

A boy once asked me: "Mr. Goodman, how do you stop sinning?" The answer is: "Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." I am often asked that question I always answer in this way: "I will not give you my answer but that which God has given." He has told us Himself very plainly. This is God's formula for not sinning. It is in Galatians 5:16: "This I say then, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Here, then, we have God's secret. That is what we are to learn. That is the way of victory, and liberty, and holy joy. It is to walk by the Spirit. It means to walk in communion with Christ by His Holy Spirit, rendering Him prompt obedience. It means to walk under His guidance. It means to abide in Him, for whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not ..." (I John 3:6).

The Upward Look

May I repeat an old story. There was once a drunken, wretched fellow who hawked things in the street. Among his other vices he was fond of dog-fighting, and he was generally to be seen with one of his dogs at his heels. One day, this man, who was known by the name of Bulldog Tom, heard the Gospel preached in the street. He had by this time tasted something of the bitterness of sin, and he was very miserable. He heard this wondrous Good News, that the Son of God loved him and had died for him, and that he was willing to receive and save him from his sins. It was indeed good news to Bulldog Tom; he believed it, and obeyed it, and he cast himself at the feet of his Lord and received forgiveness of sins. He became a new man; he put away his old drunken ways, and among other things the dog-fighting went, and he began to adorn the doctrine of Christ his Savior.

So wonderfully did he do it that some of the other Christians said: "look here, Tom, we have been Christians longer than you have,

but you seem to have outstripped us. You have got rid of all your old ways. How have you done it?" This is what Tom said; "When I was training my dogs to fight I did not allow them to have bones. Bones are not good for dogs in training. Sometimes when I was out with one of my dogs he would see a bone in the road, and would go for it, and I would say, 'No!' And the dog would look up at me. Presently he would look down again at the bone, and again I would say, 'No!' and so long as I could keep that dog looking up at me, we got past all the bones in safety. It is like that with me and my Lord," said Tom. "There are the old temptations, and my old companions inviting me to come along and have a good time with them as before. But in my heart and conscience the Holy Spirit says, 'No, Tom'; and I lift my eyes to my Lord; and while my eyes are ever toward Him I get past all the old temptations in safety." This I say, then, "Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

The Mind of the Flesh

Now, let us notice the seven things that are said here about Walking after the Flesh.

1. FLESH-WALKERS MIND THE THINGS OF THE FLESH (Romans 8:5).

Of course they do! If you tell me that a carnal Christian goes to the theater, and to the cinema, I say, "Of course he does; he is living after the flesh, and therefore minds the things of the flesh." But the believer who walks after the Spirit minds and rejoices in the things of the Spirit.

2. "FOR TO BE CARNALLY MINDED IS DEATH; BUT TO BE SPIRITUALLY MINDED IS LIFE AND PEACE" (Romans 8:6).

Flesh-minding is death. If we walk after the flesh everything worthwhile in our lives will die. There will be no joy; there will be no fellowship with the Lord's people; there will be no service for Him; we will never win a soul for Christ, if we walk after the flesh, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye must die" (Romans 8:13, R.V.). Everything good, everything noble, everything spiritual in the believer dies as he walks after the flesh. Oh, you who are living after the flesh, repent and turn to God, ask your Lord to forgive you, and no longer dishonor Him by walking after the flesh!

3. THE MIND OF THE FLESH IS ENMITY AGAINST GOD (Romans 8:7).

We become enemies of God when we turn to fleshly things. Any man who will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God. We walk at enmity with God when we do those things that are simply gratifying the desires of the flesh. Dear believer, put away those things, for in minding them you are walking at enmity with the Lord Who loved you and redeemed you by His grace; and you are bringing sorrow to your own heart. Flesh-minding is enmity against God. God will never be reconciled to the flesh. It is utterly incurable. This is true of all our enemies. The devil is incurable and will be cast into the lake of fire. The world is incurable and is going to be burned up. There is only one way, and that is to walk after the Spirit. Remember, then, that you are at enmity with God if you are walking according to the flesh.

4. THEREFORE FLESH-WALKERS CANNOT PLEASE GOD (Romans 8:8).

It is a solemn fact that if we walk after the flesh we cannot please God; He cannot be pleased with us. And it is a great thing to know that we are well-pleasing in His sight.

5. The Believer's Sphere

THE BELIEVER'S SPHERE OF LIFE AND ACTION IS NOT "IN THE FLESH" (Romans 8:9). It does not mean that the flesh is not in him; it means that he has no business there, or as an old Puritan put it, "he hath no more traffic." The Apostle John tells us that those who are Christ's cannot live there, and continue in the practice of sin; that that is not our sphere. There was a Christian man in a village, who one day got away from his Lord, and was seen to go into the public house; and there was a Christian boy there who was so grieved by it that he did not know what to do; it upset him to see this Christian man going to such a place. The man's name was Elijah, so the boy put his head in at the door, and shouted, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" and Elijah got up and walked out. It was not the sphere in which he ought to be found at all. The flesh is not the sphere in which the Christian lives, but "in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you."

6. WE ARE DEBTORS NOT TO LIVE AFTER THE FLESH (Romans 8:12).

We owe it to our Lord not to do so; not to live fleshly lives. Does not the love of Christ constrain us? Let it constrain us not to live unto ourselves, that is, unto the flesh, but unto Him Who died for us and rose again.

7. The Need of Mortification

BY THE SPIRIT THE CHRISTIAN MORTIFIES THE DEEDS OF THE BODY (Romans 8:13-14). The word

“mortify” comes from the Latin *mors*, which means death. Mortify is “to put to death.” It is the same word as in Romans 8:36: “For Thy sake we are killed all the day long.” We are in the energy of the Holy Spirit to mortify every motion of the flesh; and if we do so we shall live in peace. But we must learn this work of mortifying the deeds of the body. You know the old illustration. You have a wild rose stock, and you graft upon it a choice rose, and in due time you know that you will have beautiful roses. But you know, too, that there is a tendency for the old stock to send out shoots, and if you allow it to do that you will have nothing but wild roses from the old stem; so the gardener, every time he sees a shoot coming from the old stem, takes his sharp knife and cuts it off. So let us, by the Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body that we may live and produce fruit to the glory of God.

The Spiritually Minded

Let us consider, now, the Spiritual-mindedness that is the result of walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit. I ask you specially to notice Romans 8:6: “To be spiritually-minded is life and peace.”

Just a few things, first, about the mind.

1. THE MIND IS THE TRUE MAN. As Dr. WATTS said: “The mind’s the measure of the man.” “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he ...” (Prov 23:7). He is not what he appears outwardly, but he is what he is in secret. The things he thinks about, and the way he occupies his mind, are the real indications of what the man is. If one thinks unclean things one is an unclean man. If he thinks unkind things he is an unkind person. If he thinks noble things he is a noble person.

2. THINKING IS CHARACTER-MAKING. The Germans have a proverb which says: “Wass man isst er ist”—(what a man eats he is). One who feeds upon novels, and sexual stories, and all that class of garbage, will be like what he eats. You are forming your character by what you put into your mind. Remember the mind is a machine; it never originates anything itself; it only deals with what you put into it. Put rubbish into it, and it will build the rubbish into your life. Feed the flesh, and it will rise up against you in power, for thinking is character-building.

3. SINFUL THINKING IS AS GUILTY A THING AS SINFUL DOING. God is going to judge us, we are told in Rom 2:16 “by the secrets of men.” he will bring every thought into judgment. It is a most solemn thing to go on sinning in thought, for sinning in thought is sinning, sooner or later, in action. Many a young fellow falls into sin because he has been indulging in the practice of evil thinking. I once heard Dr. MEYER say—it was kind of him thus to expose his own heart—that when he was a young man he had unfortunately, contracted the habit of evil-thinking. His mind, he said, was like a picture-gallery, upon the walls of which there were hung obscene and hateful pictures, and he used to see them in imagination as he walked up and down that gallery of evil thinking. He added: “Then one day the Holy Spirit convicted me of the exceeding sinfulness of it, and I gave the key of that picture gallery to my Lord. Since then I have never traversed that unholy scene.” It is a solemn thing to think evil. People say: “You cannot help what you think,” but that is not true, for

4. THOUGHTS CAN BE CONTROLLED. Evil-thinking is like soaking rags in naphtha, when the spark of temptation comes they are in a blaze. You can stop thinking evil, and you ought to learn the art of thought-control, if you have not learned it already. There is no excuse for this secret indulgence of the mind in regard to the things of the flesh. By the Spirit every thought can and should be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Every evil thought should be mortified by the Spirit.

5. A Change of Mind THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A MATTER OF THE MIND, or, as we so often read in the Bible, of the heart, for after all the heart is the same as the mind. Repentance, the beginning of the Christian life, is a change of mind. I change my mind when I turn from rebellion, to God. The “I won’t” becomes “I will.” That is, literally, the meaning of the Greek word—another mind. What is the result of that change of mind?; it leads to conversion, the sinner turns to God, and he then takes up an attitude of faith towards God. What is Faith? Faith is an attitude of mind. It is not that I did believe, but that I became a believer. I took up a new, lifelong attitude to God. And what is sanctification? Sanctification is to have the mind of Christ. We are to be “transformed by the renewing of our mind.” We are to be conformed to the mind of Christ, we are to let that mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. The mind, through sanctification, is to be holy in thought because we have the way of thinking, of our blessed Lord.

6. The Clean Heart is similar. People are afraid to speak of a clean heart, because they think it will be taken to mean the eradication of all sin. A clean heart means just exactly what it says. Clean thoughts—a pure mind. When David said: “Create in me a clean heart, O God ...” (Psalm 51:10), he sought deliverance from those

lustful thoughts and passions which brought such reproach upon his name. To be spiritually-minded is to have a clean and wholesome mind and thoughts, it is to be pure in heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"

What, then, is the state of heart that can be described as the Spiritual Mind? I desire to give you five short answers. There are certain frames of mind that mark the spiritual Christian. Here is the first:

1. The Fear of the Lord

"BE THOU IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD ALL THE DAY LONG" (Proverbs 23:17). To be in the fear of the Lord is to be spiritually-minded. We think of the "fear of the Lord" as an Old Testament expression, but we read of the first disciples that they walked in "the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." Therefore, if we desire to be spiritually-minded we must seek to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long. The fear of the Lord is first a fear to sin against Him. Be afraid of sinning; be afraid of the punishment, of the chastisement you will bring upon yourself. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31). The fear of the Lord means to have the awe of God upon our spirits. "Stand in awe, and sin not ..." (Psalm 4:4). Say: "How can I do this thing and sin against God?" And it means also that filial affection, the desire not to grieve the Heavenly Father.

2. The Peace of God

We have another frame of mind. "LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE IN YOUR HEARTS" (Colossians 3:15). Let it garrison your hearts. It is a great thing to have the peace of God in our hearts. You can tell the spiritual man. Look at his face, and you will see the peace of God on it. You remember that whenever Jesus healed anyone He nearly always said, "Go in peace." Literally, "Go into peace." There is nothing like the peace of God to garrison the heart. The spiritually-minded man lives a life of peace. Naaman, after he was healed, anticipated trouble; when he took his king into the house of Rimmon he would have to bow to the idol. Might it be forgiven? But Elisha did not answer his question. We must not meet difficulties halfway. "Go in peace," said Elisha. And Naaman went in peace; and I fancy I can see him in the temple of Rimmon, with the king on his arm. Naaman is standing as straight as a poker. Let the king do his worst, to bow would be to lose the peace of God he had in his heart, and this was more precious than life itself. I was in Poland a little while ago, and there met a young fellow who had recently been converted through the preaching of the Gospel. He had to register his change of religion and this he did. The Roman priest saw the entry and went round to his lodgings, seized his Bible, though it was a Roman Catholic version, and thrust it into the stove, and then turned upon the young man with his stick, and thrashed him soundly. I asked him: "Did you stand that?" and he replied, "I had the peace of God in my heart. I did not mind." Of course, if he had touched the priest it would have meant prison for him. Thank God we here do not live under that sort of thing.

3. The Joy of the Lord

Another thing that marks the spiritual mind is THE JOY OF THE LORD. What an experience it is to be happy in Christ. You who are walking after the flesh, you do not know what you are losing. The joy of the Lord is a very precious thing. Sometimes I have felt as though I wanted to get away somewhere where I could shout without disturbing anyone. There is a little instrument called a sun-meter. It is like an electric bulb but contains a little wheel that spins merrily round when the sun shines upon it, and thus records the sunshine. If a shadow falls upon it, it ceases to rotate. So is the joy of the Lord in the believer's heart. All is melody to the Lord until the shadow of disobedience falls upon it, then the music ceases. "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10). It is those who win souls for Christ, who know what the joy of God is in their hearts, and have that joy reflected on their faces.

4. The Word of Christ

"LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY ..." (Colossians 3:16), is another spiritual frame of mind. It is the cure for evil thinking. We overcome evil by good. If you would be spiritually-minded, have your mind full of the Word of God. Be busy with the Word of God, for in the Word of God we have the mind of the Lord. In Ephesians it says, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). And in Colossians, where there is a parallel passage, it says: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16). Really they are same thing. To be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with the Word of Christ; for the Spirit of God reveals Christ to us through His Word.

5. The Love of Christ

Another thing, and I think I have kept the best till the last, is this: "KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD ..." (Jude 21). It is a further mark of the spiritual mind. Natural affection is an emotion, a very pleasant and a very desirable thing; but the love of God is a principle in the heart leading to a studied denial of self in the interests of others. It is to be like God who sends His rain upon the just and the unjust, and His sunshine on the evil and on the good. And this love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5). Not only does the Spirit reveal God's love to us but creates in us the same love. So that like David with Mephibosheth, we may show the kindness of God to others. A missionary told me that a young Chinaman came seeking for baptism, and was asked how he had been saved. He said: "Years ago, in the Boxer rising, I was one of those who stoned the 'foreign devils.' I threw a stone and hit a missionary, and the blood flowed from a wound down his leg. I was just rejoicing in the success of my stone, when I saw a most remarkable look come over the face of the missionary, it was a look of pity and of love, and I heard him say, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' That look," he said, "has haunted me. And when I heard you had come with the same Gospel Message, I felt I must come and hear it." The world never sees Grace, that is love to the undeserving. It is only manifested by those who have the Love of God shed abroad in their heart by the gracious Holy Spirit. These, then, are the qualities of the Spiritual Mind. They are Life and Peace.

V THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE BELIEVER, ROMANS 8:15-39

- In Romans 6 we saw our position as being free from sin's condemnation, and from its dominion as we walk by the Spirit in the obedience of faith.
- In Romans 7 we saw that we were not under law. We could not live under the law because the strength of sin is the law, but being discharged from the law, we have our standing in grace. We saw the operation of the law of God discovering in us a law, or principle, of sin and death; and learned that while the law discovered it, it could not deliver us from it. In the early part of
- Romans 8 we were introduced to the truth that the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death which is in our members.
- Up to this 8th chapter we have had only a single reference to the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5), but now the subject of the Holy Spirit is brought before us at length. We not only learn that the Holy Spirit makes us free from the law of sin and death, but have much teaching as to the gracious work of that indwelling Spirit.

When we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, we received Him as our Lord and Savior; we did not receive Him as to His Body, for His Body is in Heaven at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He came to us, however, in the Person of the Holy Spirit; and that Holy Spirit has made our body His temple, so that the Holy Spirit actually dwells in our bodies. He does not speak as from Himself, for He is there as the Agent of our Risen Lord. When we read of "Christ in you," it means that Christ is in you by that wondrous Agent, the Holy Ghost, who is come to represent Christ to you in the secrets of your inner consciousness. The Lord spoke of Him as the Comforter, the Paraclete, and we have the same word used of Christ in I John 2:1, where we read: "We have an Advocate (Paraclete) with the Father." Thus there are two Advocates. There is one Advocate dwelling in Heaven and representing us to the Father; and there is another Paraclete (or Advocate) dwelling in our bodies and representing our Blessed Lord and the Father to us. So that the Holy Spirit is for all purposes Christ in you, the Representative of your Divine, Risen Lord. His business is to reveal Christ to you, and to make His will known to you, so that you may walk in a way well-pleasing to Him. That is all very simple.

Endued with Power

How, then, does the Holy Spirit work in us? Can we recognize His work? Yes, but we do not recognize the Holy Spirit by any emotional feeling. The Lord Jesus says: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ..." (Acts 1:8); and that coming took place at your conversion. We cannot receive Christ without receiving the Holy Spirit. We cannot receive the Holy Spirit without receiving Christ, for they are, for that purpose, one and the same. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives we are endued with power. You say, perhaps, "But I do not feel any power; I am not experiencing in my own life that overcoming power of which I hear so many speak." Well, let me give you an illustration.

A business firm erects a large factory which is to be driven by electric power. The cables are laid on, the machinery is all prepared, and everything is ready, but for some reason or other the power is not yet supplied. The owners keep asking the authorities why the power is not given them; and at last they get a satisfactory response to their demand, and they are told that, "On Monday morning next, at eight o'clock, you will receive power." Accordingly at that time the hands are there in attendance, the machines are prepared, everything is ready; and as eight o'clock strikes, in dead silence, without any visible or sensible change, that factory is endued with power. Nothing apparently happens; no one sees or feels anything; but they know that power has been received; it has come silently. But why are the machines not working? Because they have not yet been connected up to the power. As soon, however, as

the union with the various machines is made, the whole place is throbbing with activity and industry.

Stepping Out in Faith

So when we came to Christ He gave to us that Holy Spirit of promise. We were endued with power from on high, and it became our responsibility to lay hold of that power, to avail ourselves of it, and to walk in the energy and power of the Holy Ghost. And if we do so, relying upon our Lord, we will find that we shall never put forth any effort in our lives to do His will and to obey Him but the power of the Spirit will be there to enable us to fulfill His will. If we sin against Him, or otherwise grieve Him, the power will be unavailable. But if we will walk by the Spirit we can step out in the confidence of faith, and can say: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," because He has given us the power of the mighty indwelling Spirit. It is those who step out in faith who realize the power.

All who are in the line of God's will have that power accompanying them. Peter had power to walk on the water. He got out of the ship; he stood upon that unstable element; he let go the boat—I admire Peter for that—he stepped out; and he walked on the water; for the Lord had bidden him, "Come!" Being in the line of his Lord's will, he had his Lord's power. The life of faith is like walking on the water; a thing absolutely impossible to nature, but possible in the power and energy of the Spirit of God. Whenever the Lord says, "Go!" "Do!" "Come!" "Speak!"—whenever He bids us do any of these things, the power will always be ours. We shall not feel it; but we may step out in faith to do all our Lord bids us do; and we shall prove that the mighty power of the Holy Ghost is always available for us.

Sevenfold Operations of the Spirit In this chapter we have the Sevenfold Operations of the Spirit, some of which we have already considered.

1. THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT (Romans 8:2).

That mighty power that has come to us, and of which we may avail ourselves; the mighty power that has brought us deliverance, has set us free from the law of sin and death. Thank God we need not yield to sin anymore! We need not walk in the paths of death any more. There is that power in us by which we are freed from the law of sin and of death which is in our members. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." I need not repeat this, as we have already dealt with it.

2. THE QUICKENING OF OUR MORTAL BODIES (Romans 8:11).

Some may ask: "Why am I condemned to live in a dead body?" Because the Lord so wills it. He knows best. He says: "You will have the battle both outside and inside until the time comes when I shall deliver you." Then that Spirit which raised Christ from the dead is going to quicken that mortal (dying) body of yours, and it will then no longer be subject to the law of sin and death. Since He raised Christ from the dead by that same Spirit; and you are associated with your Lord; He will also quicken your mortal body. That day is referred to in Romans 8:23 as "the Adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" when, at the Coming of our Lord the Spirit quickens this body of humiliation. Then it will put on incorruption, it will be transformed and changed and glorified, and made like to the glorified body of our Lord.

3. The Genealogy of Sin THE MORTIFYING OF THE DEEDS OF THE BODY (Romans 8:13), is another work of the Holy Spirit on our behalf.

This we have already considered. Only I would remind you again of this, that there is no motion of sin that ever comes to you in thought, or word, or deed, that you cannot instantly mortify in the energy of the Holy Ghost if you will only do as your Lord tells you. You are to mortify these things. Refuse to have anything to do with them; put them to death; don't trifle with them or they will rise up against you and defeat you. By the Spirit's power you are to slay these "deeds of the body." James 1:14-15 gives us the genealogy of sin. "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, ringeth forth death." Now you see what you must do. You are not to let lust conceive; you are to kill it before it brings forth sin. If you harbor it in your thoughts; if you say "yes" to it instead of "no," it will conceive, and bring forth sin. Do not forget that the work of the Holy Ghost is to energize you so that you may be enabled by the mighty power of the Risen Christ to mortify every motion of the flesh.

4. The Leading of the Spirit, Ro 8:14 THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Rom 8:14).

We come here to another work of the Holy Spirit. That blessed Spirit which gives us liberty, which is going to quicken our mortal body by and by, and which enables us to mortify the lusts of the flesh, that same Spirit guides us. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When we were unsaved we were "lost." It is the word the Lord used to describe our state by nature. When a man is lost he does not know

where he is, or where he is going, or what to do. He wanders about in an aimless way. What a true description of the unsaved man. He is a wanderer in the dark—lost. But directly he comes to Christ he receives the Holy Spirit, he is no longer lost, but led; and he has only to follow the guidance of his Lord, and he will be safe and right in his walk. So it is our privilege to be led by the Spirit of God. Someone says: “How may I know this leading of the Spirit of God? How does He lead us?” The Lord leads by His Spirit in two ways.

The sevenfold operations numbering picks up again down below at "The Spirit bears witness with our Spirit"

First of all, He uses this sword of His Spirit, the Scriptures. This is the instrument He uses in all His work. Those who are led by the Spirit are led by the Scriptures, for the Holy Ghost takes the Scriptures, and applies them to our individual cases; and we are thus led by our Good Shepherd. If we walk by the light of these sacred oracles, this Word of God, we will be led aright, and we will walk securely. “If ye continue in My Word ye shall be My disciples indeed,” Jesus said; “and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” So that to be led by the Spirit means to be led by the Word of God as He applies it to our particular condition.

Conviction of Sin

Secondly, He uses the Scriptures to convict us of the will of God. For instance, here is a man, and I say to him: “Do you know that you are a sinner?” “Oh, we are all sinners!” he replies, quite unconcernedly, and, lighting up his cigarette, he marches briskly off, as if the question of sin did not matter in the least. Some time afterwards I meet him again, and he looks as though he has not slept for a month. I say: “What is the matter with you?” He replies, “Oh, I am such a sinner! I cannot sleep for thinking about it. I am afraid I will wake up in hell. Can you help me?” “But,” I said, “when I spoke to you before you were quite unconcerned.” What has happened? The Holy Spirit has convicted him of sin. Probably He had used some word from the lips of some preacher; and the Holy Spirit took that word and smashed it into the heart of that man, until he was led to cry out, “What shall I do?”

In the same way, if your heart is laid open to His Word and its convicting power, He will use that Sword of His to lead and direct you. You know that the Word of God is called the Sword of the Spirit. I have sometimes heard people say: “I must take my Sword.” It is not your Sword; it is the Spirit’s Sword; and if you lay your heart open to it you will feel its keen edge. But you must have your heart open to conviction, and attentive to His teaching, you must hear “what the Spirit saith,” and you will be led aright. The great type of the Holy Spirit is, of course, the Pillar of Fire and of Cloud. What a splendid picture of the guidance of the Spirit! There was the Church in the wilderness, with no roads, no sign posts, no means of guidance, but the Pillar of Cloud to lead them by day, or the Pillar of Fire to light them by night (Exodus 13:21). They had these simple rules to keep.

1. THEY HAD TO LOOK UP AND FOLLOW; to submit themselves to the Pillar’s guidance. I remember hearing a story of a man who was walking behind a gipsy woman, and when they came to a place where the road divided, the gipsy woman threw her stick up into the air, and let it fall on the ground. Then she did it a second time; and a third time. By this time the gentleman had caught her up, and, being curious, he enquired: “Why do you throw your stick up into the air like that?” She replied: “That is how I determine which way to go; I go whichever way the stick points,” “But you threw it up three times?” he said, wondering why she had done so. “Yes, I did!” she answered, “for the silly thing would point that way, and I wanted to go this!” There are people who profess to want God to guide them, but who really want God to let them have their own way. They keep on asking God until they persuade themselves: “He has consented to what I want.” That is not guidance! That is self-will! If I am willing to follow, the Lord will give me guidance, but I must honestly submit to be led this way or that as He will.

2. THEY HAD TO WAIT TILL THE CLOUD MOVED. This is another rule they had to learn, if they would know the secret of guidance. The flesh finds waiting wearisome. It wants to rush on, but faith learns to wait. In Numbers 9:22, we read: “Whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried ... they journeyed not” Neither must we go before the Lord. Ask Him to guide, but be willing to wait. To make our own plans, and then ask God to bless them is not seeking guidance, but merely asking His consent to our own will.

3. THEY HAD TO OBEY IMMEDIATELY THE CLOUD MOVED Such was the third rule that they had to learn. Whenever the Cloud was taken up, whether by night or by day, they followed for light disobeyed becomes darkness.

To walk by the Spirit is to be obedient to Him in all things.

Our blest Redeemer before He breathed

His tender last farewell,
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed
With us to dwell.

Sons of God, Rom 8:16

Notice, then, that those who are thus led by the Spirit are sons of God. We see from Romans 8:16 that all believers are children of God, but children and sons are to be distinguished. The distinction is always observed in the New Testament between children of God, and sons of God. Sons are grown-up children, children whom God can take into His confidence, and show His ways. Children have to be spoon-fed and led by the hand. Sons of God can feed themselves from the Word of God, and they know the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Continuing the sevenfold operations of the Spirit numbering

5. THE SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT.

We see here yet another work of the Holy Spirit. He bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Doubt, bondage, fear, go when the Spirit teaches us to cry, "Abba, Father!" I know I am a sinner; I have never had any doubt about it since God showed me my own heart. I know also I am a child of God. How do I know? In the same way that I know I am a sinner. God has revealed it, and the Spirit has convicted me of the truth of it. I have no more doubt about it than I have that I am a sinner. It is by the Spirit's teaching through the Scriptures that we know we are the children of God, so that we call Him, Abba, Father! Isn't that beautiful? As we lay our heads upon our pillow at night, we may say it, "Abba, Father!" It may always be our last thought. "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." Did you ever hear such things? What could the apostle be thinking about? Coheirs with the eternal Son of God! And further, our privilege is not only to reign with Him, but to suffer with Him down here.

Let the thought that you are thus privileged to be an heir with Him remind you that you should also be a partaker of, and have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, as well as of His glory that shall follow. Don't be afraid to suffer for Him! It is a good thing to suffer with your Lord. When you are made to suffer for Him at home, think of what they said of Christ, "He is beside Himself, and hath a devil!" Don't be ashamed to bear a like reproach for His sake. So the apostle speaks of our suffering with Him that we may be glorified together.

6. His Own Secret Sign, Romans 8:17-18

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS AN EARNEST of what we are yet to receive. The mention of suffering leads the apostle to dwell on the subject, and then he shows us that we have received the Spirit of God in another capacity, namely, as the Firstfruits. God has given us the Holy Spirit as an Earnest of what we are yet to receive when we enter upon our inheritance. The Spirit is a Seal, an Earnest, the First-fruits—God's secret sign upon His own.

Then on each setteth
His own secret sign,
They that have My Spirit,
These, saith He, are Mine.

The apostle tells us several things about suffering. The first thing He says is that it is nothing compared to the coming Glory. The French have a saying: "Suffering passes; to have suffered remains." Most of us have been through suffering. If I ask you: "Are you sorry that you went through that trial?" you will say: "I was sorry for myself at the time; but now it is over I would not have been without the experience." So the apostle says: "The suffering is grievous, but it is nothing as compared with the Glory that is to come. You will forget all that suffering when you get to the Glory." Then he tells us that we are living in the earnest expectation of good things to come. This creation waits with an earnest expectation for the manifestation of the sons of God. There is a day coming when God is going to show who are His sons. We are earnestly waiting for that. We are living on the tiptoe of expectancy. The unsaved man has no expectancy, no sure hope. He gets more and more wretched as he draws nearer to the end. It has been said that the devil has no happy old men; for such the days get darker as they go by. But we wait with happy expectation for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Faith for the Future, Romans 8:19-25

The present creation is temporary only. That is to say, God has stamped upon it the character of that which is passing and unsatisfactory. It is "subject to vanity." "Vanity" means that which will never satisfy nor continue.

Childhood and youth are vanity; they will not last. Nothing on this earth satisfies, nor does it last. God has stamped it with that characteristic, because this creation is not the real thing; this creation is only the introduction to the new creation. These are our schooldays; we are going Home one day. But we have this hope. The word "hope" means anticipation; so God subjected the creation to vanity, because He had a purpose in view.

This creation is going to be delivered from the bondage of corruption and brought into the liberty of the sons of the glory of God. I am looking forward to that new creation, and I hope you are too. No more bondage; no more failure. I am looking forward to having a body that will be a perfect expression of the spirit. It is not so now. I try to comfort someone who is in sorrow. What a terrible mess I make of it! My lips only say a few tame platitudes; and I feel I have done little or no good. But then we shall have a body which will be the perfect expression of the mind; a perfect instrument of the soul; a glorified body; a body that shall enable us to give expression to all that is in the heart. "The adoption" is the time when the Son comes into his inheritance.

There is a good time coming; to anticipate that is the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the firstfruits of that inheritance, for we are saved by hope, saved in anticipation of good things to come. Hope in the New Testament never means "perhaps" or "perhaps not." It is always "a sure and steadfast hope." There is not any uncertainty about it; but it is not yet an actual fact. Therefore we still go on hoping. Hope is really faith for the future.

7. Prayer by the Spirit, Rom 8:26-28

"THE SPIRIT ALSO HELPETH OUR INFIRMITIES" (Rom 8:26). He, the apostle, tells us that while "we know not what we should pray for as we ought: the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us." It does not mean that the Spirit intercedes up in Heaven; Christ is doing that. But in this body of ours, the temple of the Holy Ghost, He makes intercession, creates desires, and inspires prayers and petitions. I cannot always express these longings. They are often only inexpressible sighings and groanings. Groanings which cannot be uttered, but they are the work of the Spirit within. He knows our need, and He makes intercession in us in this manner; He does it according to the will of God. You know the beautiful hymn:

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

We read that, "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit ..." (Romans 8:27). He, of course, is God. He can read the groanings; He can interpret the sighings. He can tell what the tears mean, and He answers those groanings and sighings because they are according to His own mind and will. It is thus the Spirit of God helps our infirmities. And not only does God answer according to the Spirit-led prayer within, but He also works without, by ordering the affairs of our lives. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Do you love God? Then not only does the Spirit make intercession in you with unutterable groanings, but all things in your life work together for your good. Prayer and providence go hand in hand, guiding and directing our lives to the glory of God.

Appointed to Glory Rom 8:29-30

The chapter closes with what one might almost call, a Final Shout of Triumph. We are a happy people, and I do not see why we should not shout and sing. See what the apostle says in the Romans 8:31: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" What a simple question. We read much about grace in Romans 5. Shall I give you a good definition of grace? Grace is God undertaking the sinner's salvation. He cannot save himself, said God, so I will do it for him. And, beloved, if God be for us, if God be saving us, who can be against us? Now see how He undertook this work.

You have the story of our salvation in Romans 8:29-30. First, there is the foreknowledge, then there is predestination. We are predestined to be like Christ, to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son; and He has undertaken the work. God is our Savior, mediating our salvation through the death and the resurrection of His own beloved Son. Next in order of time He called us with an effectual calling. One day we heard the Gospel. The Lord said to us: "Come unto Me; follow Me," and we came, and so He called, and "whom He called them He also justified" gratuitously in His goodness and grace. We have already seen how God justified us on the ground of the blood that has been shed. And "whom He justified them He also glorified." He appointed us to glory, and we are

going to be there, thank God. Well then may we ask: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

The apostle then fittingly ends the chapter by asking

Seven Wonderful Questions, Rom 8:31-35

1. "IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?" (Romans 8:31). For who hath resisted His will?
2. "HE THAT SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, HOW SHALL HE NOT WITH HIM ALSO FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS" (Romans 8:32). If He gave the best, will He not give the rest? If He gave Christ, His own dear Son, to die and to be put to shame that He might redeem us at such tremendous cost, is He going to stop halfway through? Will He not give us the rest?
3. "WHO SHALL LAY ANYTHING TO THE CHARGE OF GOD'S ELECT?" (Romans 8:33). Who is going to charge us now since God has justified us?
4. "GOD WHO JUSTIFIETH," is He going to charge me? (Romans 8:33). I hear no condemning voice, for the accuser of the brethren has been destroyed at the Cross. Will the Judge who acquitted me turn round and condemn me?
5. "WHO IS HE THAT SHALL CONDEMN?" (Romans 8:34). No one can condemn me. No one can bring up my sins against me now, for they are all under the precious Blood. Who, then, shall condemn me?
6. SHALL CHRIST WHO DIED CONDEMN? (Romans 8:34). God has committed all judgment to the Son. But He died for me, and He rose again from the dead, showing that God was satisfied. And now He is interceding for me at the right hand of God. Shall He who loved me and gave Himself for me, condemn me? Impossible!
7. "WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?" (Romans 8:35). No earthly experience can do that. No created thing above or below can separate us from His love. Nothing present or future can separate us from the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus our Savior. Such Is our Destiny Oh, how it warms our hearts! How it fills our lips with singing! It is well expressed in Ephesians 2:7: "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ."

What a prospect for Eternity! HALLELUJAH!